The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service offers news summaries and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor covering the federal, legislative, and judicial fields, and embodying the interpretation of trends in the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1574 — WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 1941 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer — VOL. 31, NO. 23

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

It's easy to say "We told you so" but we don't like to do that to the Government of the United States when it is in trouble. And there is no mistaking the fact that the Government is in trouble. It is suffering from a bad outbreak of Communist strikes.

These strikes, fomented by Communist-controlled CIO unions, are embarrassing national defense production in key plants and are embarrassing the national leadership of the CIO as well.

We have no reluctance in saying to Phil Murray "We told you so". We did. We told him publicly shortly after he took office as President of the CIO that unless he got rid of the Communists who had entrenched themselves in the CIO organization with the encouragement of John L. Lewis they would undermine the CIO and bring about a nation-wide reaction against all of organized labor.

The truth of our prediction has now been borne out by events. Murray did not get rid of the Communists. He took orders from John L. Lewis, instead, and became the President-in-name-only of the CIO. Now there is talk of a serious split in the CIO leadership and Louis Stark, New York Times labor expert, writes there is talk of an open break between the left-wing and right-wing factions of the CIO which may lead to the secession of Communist-controlled unions.

The Army Moves In

Now the situation has changed. The CIO leadership has appealed in vain to the strikers at the North American Aviation plant in Los Angeles to go back to work pending settlement of their dispute with the company by the National Defense Mediation Board. Forced to be frank, the CIO has publicly branded the local CIO union leaders as Communists. And, as we write this, the United States Army, under the direction of an Executive Order by President Roosevelt, has marched in and taken possession of the plant. The Army has pledged itself to protect any workers who wish to go back to their jobs.

These are the developments on the strike front, but in Congress even more sinister moves are on the way. New bills and amendments striking at the fundamental rights of workers are being introduced by the score and denunciations of even the legitimate aims of labor are broadcast by labor's enemies. The newspapers and the radio soothe with anti-labor propaganda and the feelings of the American public are being whipped into a frenzy against labor.

That isn't all. Colonel Hershey, Acting Director of the Draft, has just issued orders which, in effect, will result in the drafting of any strikers coming within the age limits.

Now all of this or any part of it is enough to get any friend of labor excited. Never in this century, during war or peace, has the President of the United States before been forced to call on the United States Army to help break a strike. Never since the World War has it been necessary for the Government to threaten to draft strikers. Never since the earliest days of organized labor has there been such a concerted and widespread campaign of vilification against labor.

Let's Set a Better Example

Whom do we have to thank for all of this? The Communists. Nothing could please them better. The worse conditions get, the better they will like it. For they count on getting the workers of this country so bitter as to be ready for revolution.

Never we already have indicated that the Government itself is partly at fault for failing to use stern measures long ago to stamp out Communism and for failing to enforce labor's laws against such agitators as Bridges and Harry Bridges. And we have made it plain that the CIO is largely to blame for coddling Communists instead of kicking them out.

But we cannot be content to place the blame where it belongs. We must do something positive to prevent the situation from becoming more acute and to checkmate the Communists.

As the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor stated at its recent meeting, "we can do this, we must do this and we will do it."

We can and must do it by example. We can and must do it by setting our heads and remaining cool. We can and must do it by refraining from engaging in strikes against national defense industries. We can and must do it by presenting our just complaints to the Administration's sympathetic Federal agencies as the Conciliation Service of the Department of Labor and the National Defense Mediation Board. We can and must do it by remaining on the job until these agencies have been given a full opportunity to bring about peaceful settlements without stopping production.

No one can blame President Roosevelt for the extreme measures he has taken. He had no other way out. He was faced by a threat to the safety of the United States and he acted accordingly. On the contrary, labor must support the President in his difficult position and it must do its part. It must by its actions make it unnecessary for the President to take such steps in the future. We are confident that the workers of America will see their duty and perform it.

Switchmen's Union, Hailing Progress, Opens Its Twenty-First Convention

Buffalo, N. Y.—The Switchmen's Union of North America opened its twenty-first regular convention here with officers' reports that they could report showing significant progress in the past four years.

President Thomas C. Cashen disclosed that in membership, finances and collective bargaining strength the union is stronger than ever before.

Founded in 1894, the Switchmen's Union of North America has a long and inspiring history. At that time wages were 25 cents an hour for a ten hour day with no extra compensation for overtime. Today the union rate is from 91 to 94½ cents an hour for an eight hour day and overtime rates run from $1.32 to $1.42 an hour.

Thus the union has increased the earnings of its members more than 300 per cent through its efforts.

Vast benefits have also been brought to the members by the union's insurance system. From 1894 to 1936, insurance was maintained on a voluntary basis, but in 1901 this was made obligatory, and benefits were after spectacularly justified the wisdom of that step.

Millions of dollars have been paid in claims for total disability and death. In addition, the International Lodge has made benevolent donations of about $1,000,000 to members whose sickness or injury did not come within the meaning of the Constitution.

Last, but not least, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been paid in sick and injury benefits to members by local lodges throughout the United States and Canada.

The Switchmen must keep up the struggle without pause, President Cashen stressed.

"The problem that confronts our union today is securing and maintaining the benefits for switchmen that have been established through legislation and collective bargaining," he said.

"This can only be done through proper organization of men in switching service, and that in turn can only be secured through complete cooperation of the rank and file under the direction of officers and organizers of our union."

Considerable thought should be given to what the future holds, Cashen's report continued.

"The railroad industry is undergoing an evolution in the method of transportation. Future problems will be more complex and difficult of solution. They will demand thorough and intelligent consideration."

Labor Subscribes For $325,000 In Drive To Aid British Labor

New York, N. Y.—Matthew Woll, chairman of the American Labor Committee to Aid British Labor announced that orders had been received for $325,000 worth of subscription books in the organization's drive. These books represent orders from labor organizations all over the country. In addition contributions from individuals have increased in size and number.

One of the largest checks received to date was a check for $1,000 from Gillespie, Illinois Local No. 1 of the Progressive Miners of America. The check was accompanied by a letter which said "Here is a thousand dollars to aid British Labor." Commenting on this gift, Mr. Woll said:

"I wish to express appreciation for this notable contribution. I am grateful that the miners should be able to send such an amount of money. It proves to the world that Labor has benefited from democracy as it could not have done under any other system, and that labor is determined that this attack on our system shall fail as every attack has failed. This check is not the end, it merely sets a mark which all other unions must match and try to surpass."

A check for $500 was contributed by the employes and management of Philip Shlansky and Brother, Inc., cloakmakers of 500 Seventh Avenue, New York City. The firm also presented proceeds from an employes picnic in the amount of $250.00 and a contribution of $250.00 by the management.

William A. Collins, Field Representative of the A. F. of L., accepting the check in the absence of Matthew Woll, stated that this contribution showed fine cooperation of management and labor and called for more evidences of identity of interest from labor and management all over the United States.

Sharp Increases In Living Costs Justify Wage Increases, Green Says

Food Prices Have Gone Up Six Per Cent In Year, Official Figures Show

Washington, D. C.—The cost of living in thirty-three large American cities has increased more than three per cent in the past year, according to figures made public by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food prices have leaped six per cent, clothing two per cent, rent one per cent, house furnishings two per cent, and miscellaneous items two per cent, the survey showed.

The index used by the Department of Labor bureau is based on the prices of 198 types of goods and services bought by wage earners and lower salaried clerical workers.

A table showing the increases in the chief classifications from March, 1940, to April, 1941, is given below:

Item	March, 1940	April, 1941
All items	99.1	102.2
Food	94.6	100.6
Clothing	100.4	102.3
Rent	104.2	105.4
Fuel, electricity and ice	100.1	100.9
House furnishings	100.8	102.6
Miscellaneous	100.5	102.8

American Federation of Labor officials declared that these increases in living costs completely wipe out the virtual wage cut for American workers and justify general pay increases in every industry where wages have not been adjusted to new price conditions.

"The workingman's dollar," President William Green commented, "does not go nearly as far now as it did a year ago. Every woman who does the buying of food and clothing for the family knows that she cannot get along these days with the same amount as formerly.

"These figures from the department of Labor just prove what every housewife in America knows.

"We urge all labor organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor to make use of these figures in collective bargaining for the protection of their members. It is the best argument possible for wage increases. It is so convincing that management cannot fail to yield part of the increased profits of industry to make up the substantial difference in the cost of living over the past year."

Catholic Priest Extols Unions

Passaic, N. J.—The only safeguard for the workers of America, the only security for the permanence of the American way of life, is to increase and strengthen the American trade union.

That statement was made here by Rev. John Monaghan, chaplain of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, New York, before the St. Nicholas Forum.

"Through the unions," Father Monaghan declared, "the present social gains have been attained. Trade unions are marked as enemies already by the American Fifth Column, who will save America for a dollar a year and sabotage its labor in the name of defense.

"Any state that must be saved only by the destruction of trade unions is not worth fighting for and certainly not worth saving."

A LAW AGAINST STRIKES?

Twentieth Century Fund Says Real Solution Is Mediation

(Following is a summary of a comprehensive survey conducted by The Twentieth Century Fund on the so-called strike problem. This survey, completely impartial, developed conclusions which are of great interest to all of organized labor):

Laws to forbid strikes in defense industries are being demanded by many persons. Totalitarian countries have completely forbidden strikes and lockouts; practically speaking, workers have little or no chance to express their grievances. This amounts to forced labor or industrial slavery.

Compulsory arbitration is usually suggested to accompany proposals for outlawing strikes in this country. Under this arrangement strikes and lockouts would be forbidden by law and workers and management would be required to submit their differences to arbitration by a tribunal. Both sides would be compelled to accept the award of the arbitrator, no matter what it might turn out to be.

Australia has had a compulsory arbitration statute since 1904. Strikes extending into two or more states are forbidden, and disputes must be submitted to the Commonwealth Court of Arbitration. New Zealand has had a similar laws to govern disputes within a single state. However, the Fund research staff finds that Australia for the past twenty-five years "has had far more strikes relative to its population than either the United States or Great Britain. While many of these strikes were clearly illegal, penalties have seldom been imposed on the strikers." . . .

Canada has had since 1907 an Act requiring a period of investigation by a special board before strikes may be called in the mining and public utility industries. During the period of 1907 to 1925, the research staff reports, "there were 425 unlawful strikes in which the requirements of the Act were entirely ignored. . . . Any attempt to enforce this section would have alienated all union support and would probably have brought a quick repeal of the Act."

In Great Britain more than one and a half million munitions workers took part in illegal strikes after the government attempted to prohibit strikes and lockouts during the World War. In the present struggle Great Britain has forbidden strikes in war industries by an order-in-council, but the order was agreed to by both labor and employers and contains no penalty provisions against strikers. The research staff says, "the regular machinery for collective bargaining has been effective in adjusting disputes even in a severe emergency and relatively few strikes have occurred."

The Committee on Labor appointed by the Fund in reviewing these research facts says flatly, "Laws to enforce compulsion can be invoked only by agreement between employers and workers—not by law. The United States got through the first World War without any law prohibiting strikes. . . . Public opinion is the effective sanction. . . . Compulsion in the settlement of any one subject on which there seems to be agreement in all divisions of the labor movement results in the ruin of management."

VOLUNTARY MEDIATION THE ANSWER

Voluntary mediation is indicated by the research facts as the answer to the problem of preventing strikes in defense industries. Mediation is a process by which both parties accept the services of an impartial outside agency which endeavors to settle industrial disputes by bringing the parties into agreement. The entire process is voluntary. There is no power to make or enforce a settlement or award. Neither employers nor workers surrender any fundamental rights in case the mediation attempt should fail.

Success of mediation as shown by the research report "usually runs above 90 per cent." The United States Conciliation Service was able to adjust all but 145 of the 1,678 disputes in which it intervened during 1938-1939. The New York State Mediation Board adjusted all but 30 of 310 cases during 1939.

The Committee on Labor of the Twentieth Century Fund urges the maximum possible mediation as a means of settling industrial disputes in defense industries. The Committee recommends the inclusion, by voluntary agreement, of mediation clauses in all collective-bargaining contracts. The Committee commends the work being done by federal and state agencies in this field.

LABOR POLICY UNDER THE ARMAMENT PROGRAM

The Fund's Committee on Labor, after reviewing the whole situation, sets forth its general attitude in these terms: "Any refusal at this time by any employer to accord to labor the full rights of self-organization and collective bargaining stipulated in the National Labor Relations Act is a dangerous threat to defense production. On labor's part there is, for the same reasons, a clear obligation to seek the legal remedy in preference to direct action, when confronted with unfair labor practices prohibited by the Act."

ANTI-LABOR BILL KILLED BY CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR

Sacramento, Calif.—A drastic anti-labor bill, which would have forced union men to handle scab-made goods and curtailed their picketing rights, was vetoed by Governor Culbert L. Olson.

The Senate overrode the veto, but the lower House sustained it, thus killing the measure.

AMALGAMATED WINS

San Francisco, Cal.—An important NLRB election victory was won here by the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employes when it, as A. F. of L. union was chosen by a majority of the Pacific Greyhound Lines employes. The vote was 544 for the Amalgamated against 339 for the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, which had conducted a strike against the company.

News Briefs

UNION COMPLAINT FORCES BACK PAY RESTITUTION

New York, N. Y.—After complaints had been filed by the International Metal Engravers Union, the Wage and Hour Division ordered the Sosnow Steel Stamp Company to make restitution of $5,520 to sixty-seven employes. The amount represents the difference between wages and overtime pay received by these employes and the amount they were entitled to under the law. The company agreed to pay the money without contesting the order. Thus the employes will receiver from $1.09 to $698 each, thanks to the union.

HAWAIIAN CONTRACTS BAR DEFENSE STRIKES

Honolulu.—A no-strike, no-lockout contract has been signed by a five-company combination handling $125,000,000 worth of Hawaiian defense contracts and the A. F. of L. International Operating Engineers Union, Robert Dodd, president, announced.

The contract affects workers in vital construction on Oahu Island and outlying military bases. It provides a 10-day period for negotiation of differences and pay increases varying from 10 to 40 per cent, Mr. Dodd said.

It is the second such contract signed on Oahu defense jobs. The first agreement was with electricians.

"We workers believe this contract is a real contribution to the national defense program in Hawaii," Mr. Dodd said.

MINIMUM PAY RAISED IN TEXTILE INDUSTRIES

Washington, D. C.—Three hundred thousand workers in the textile industry will have their minimum wages raised from 32½ cents to 33½ as of June 30, Philip B. Fleming, administrator of the Federal Wage-Hour Law, announced.

A formal order will establish a minimum wage of 33½ cents an hour throughout cotton, silk, rayon, linen, jute and cordage branches of the textile industry.

At hearings already held on the impending wage boost for more than 300,000 of the 325,000,000 or 350,000,000 workers no company or employer representative opposed the 37½-cents-an-hour proposal, according to Mr. Fleming.

He added that the decision to issue the order had the "unanimous recommendation of a committee representative of employers, labor and the public."

WAGE-HOUR DRIVE OPENS IN ALL CANNING PLANTS

Washington, D. C.—The Wage-Hour Administration began a nation-wide drive to enforce the Wage-Hour law in the canning industry. About 400 inspectors will be engaged in the campaign. Every cannery in the country will be checked.

MILLION MORE WORKERS NEEDED FOR DEFENSE

Washington, D. C.—Estimates that 1,508,600 additional workers will be needed in defense industries by April 1942 were made public by Secretary of Labor Perkins.

"Some 322,900 additional workers will be needed by the shipbuilding industry, 408,400 by aircraft, 291,600 by machine tools and ordnance and 384,700 by other defense industries," Secretary Perkins said. "It should be noted that the figures on the aircraft estimate of this kind, based upon current knowledge, is apt to be considerably increased by any future defense emergency program demanding rapidly increased production."

"It is estimated that 91,200 professional and sub-professional, 550,000 skilled, 400,000 semi-skilled and 267,500 unskilled workers, will be needed. The greatest single occupational need is for the shipbuilding trades and semi-skilled assemblers with requirements of 156,500 and 139,500 respectively."

THREE A. F. OF L. UNIONS WIN 25% PAY BOOST

Kansas City, Mo.—A remarkable increase of approximately 25 per cent in hourly wage rates was won in an agreement signed with the American Car and Foundry Company at Madison, Ill., by committees representing the Carmen, Machinists and Electrical Workers.

Gains also included establishment of piecework rates about 35 per cent higher than the hourly rates and other improvements in working conditions.

FIRST UNION CONTRACT SIGNED BY RAILROAD

Louisville, Ky.—For the first time in its history, the Tennessee, Alabama & Georgia signed a contract with A. F. of L. shopcraft unions.

O. H. Dye, grand lodge representative of the Machinists, reported that the pact, won after long negotiations, established the eight-hour day, time and one-half pay for overtime, wage raises and rules for classification of work. Heretofore working conditions on the road have been sub-standard.

A. F. L. BUYS $50,000 OF DEFENSE BONDS

Washington, D. C.—Said the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of Labor to the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States:

"Here's a check for $50,000."

Thus was consummated the purchase of $50,000 worth of national defense bonds by the American Federation of Labor.

Secretary-Treasurer George Meany told Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau he considered the defense bonds a fine investment for all patriotic labor organizations and for all American workers as well.

U. S. Troops Break CIO Plane Strike; Roosevelt Orders Strikers Drafted

Drastic Action Also Voted By Congress As CIO-Communist Outbreaks Menace Defense

Washington, D. C.—Faced by a sudden outbreak of CIO outlaw strikes bearing all the earmarks of an incipient Communist revolution, President Roosevelt and Congress cracked down with the most drastic action ever taken by this nation in peace time to assure uninterrupted industrial production. Chief developments were:

1—The President ordered U. S. Army troops to break the strike called by the CIO against the North American Aviation Company at Los Angeles. More than 2,500 soldiers marched in with fixed bayonets, the Government took over the plant and picket lines were dispersed. Attorney General Jackson branded the strike of Communist origin and every CIO leaders admitted this fact.

2—On instructions from the President, draft regulations were changed so that workers previously placed in deferred classifications because of their essential defense jobs may be drafted into the service immediately if they go on strike.

3—The House of Representatives adopted an amendment to the ten-billion-dollar Army appropriation bill under which compensation from these funds will be denied to any person, firm or corporation refusing to comply with the recommendations of the National Defense Mediation Board.

4—Senate leaders gave the green light to the Connally Bill which would empower the President to take over on behalf of the Government any defense plant shut down by a strike or lockout.

The North American Aviation strike came after the President was defied by CIO strikers in the West Coast lumber industry, who turned a deaf ear even to appeals from CIO President Phil Murray that they go back to work and let the Defense Mediation Board settle their dispute. O. M. Orton, head of the CIO International Woodworkers of America, announced he preferred the "John L. Lewis type" of labor leadership.

Following this development came widespread reports of a serious split in the high councils of the CIO between left-wing and right-wing factions. The former ruminated a group of Communist-dominated unions might strike unless they received continued support from the national CIO.

Thousands of loyal A. F. of L. workers in the North American Aviation plant, who were locked out by the CIO strike, were reported by Washington observers as ready to back to work at once. The CIO won a Labor Board election among the 3,500 employes by a slim margin of 70 votes.

President William Green said he felt certain that the American Federation of Labor members would return to their jobs "if they were actually given an opportunity to do so."

While strikes flared on the CIO-Communist front, the ranks of the American Federation of Labor unions in defense industries stood firm. No A. F. of L. strikes occurred and the friends of labor in Congress emphasized this fact in defeating some of the more extreme anti-labor measures proposed in Congress.

GREENWOOD TO BROADCAST TO RUTGERS LABOR GROUP

New York, N. Y.—Arthur Greenwood, Minister without Portfolio in the Churchill cabinet, will broadcast a message by short wave to the Rutgers Labor Institute on June 12, from 8:45 to 9:00 Eastern Daylight Time, over the Blue Network of the National Broadcasting Company. He will speak on the general topic of labor and problems of reconstruction after the war at the request of the Workers Education Bureau of America.

DETROIT ENGRAVERS RAISED

Detroit, Mich.—Wage increases of five cents an hour and a closed shop were won for employes of the Cadillac Stamp Company and the Detroit Stamp Company here under contracts negotiated by Local 6 of the International Metal Engravers Union. The two shops are the largest of their kind in the State.

AFL TEACHERS OUST COMMUNIST LOCALS

New York, N. Y.—By an overwhelming vote the membership of the American Federation of Teachers in a national referendum voted to oust three locals charged with being Communist-controlled.

Thus the union effectively served notice that the teachers of America are unalterably opposed to Communism and will not permit them to gain a foothold in the schools of America.

The vote of the Federation membership, excluding those of the three local unions involved, showed 80 per cent in favor of revoking the charters of these locals, two of which are in New York City and the third in Philadelphia.

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In the charges brought against the locals by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Teachers, the members of the union were informed that the locals had engaged in practices "detrimental to the development of democracy in education."

At the annual convention of the American Federation of Teachers in Buffalo last August a slate of officers headed by President George S. Counts was elected on a pledge to "clean house" of Communists.

Commenting on the results of the referendum, Irvin S. Kuenzli, Secretary-Treasurer of the union, said:

"The American Federation of Teachers was organized primarily for the purpose of providing better educational facilities for children and better working conditions for teachers. These objectives cannot be accomplished if teachers' groups are permitted to gain control of local branches of the Federation.

"The great majority of our locals from Coast to Coast have had little trouble with attempted control by the Communist Party. In those areas where Communist control has gained a foothold our unions have become ineffective and usually totally destroyed.

"The decisive victory of the national officers of the Federation over minority political groups within the Federation means that the union is celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary and should initiate a period of tremendous growth and prosperity on the part of the international union. Thousands of teachers throughout the nation have desired affiliation with the American Federation of Labor but have hesitated to organize because of adverse publicity emanating from a few of our local unions.

"The position of the American Federation of Teachers in the labor movement of the nation will be greatly strengthened by this splendid vote of confidence in the national officers of the American Federation of Teachers. With the nation preparing for the defense of American democracy for which our forefathers lived and died, there is no place for fifth columnists either in the teaching profession or in the labor movement. This statement does not imply an hysterical witch-hunting and red baiting campaign but merely a common sense and practical loyalty to the freedoms which are fundamental to American democracy."

Hepburn Brands CIO In America As "Greatest Enemy of Democracy"

TORONTO, Canada—Speaking in the strongest terms, Premier Hepburn of Ontario denounced, and will fight in the north and south of the Dominion border line.

His branded the CIO as the "greatest enemy democracy has in North America."

"In 1937," he recalled, "we challenged the illegal activities of the CIO, which attempted to get a foothold in this province, and we have eliminated them altogether. If given a chance, labor itself in a secret ballot would always go on record against its attempts to obstruct war production and to hold up manufacture of the tanks and guns that are to help the workingman himself is determined to provide, to protect his mother, his wife and his sisters.

"It is most unfortunate that they were allowed to carry on their activities in the United States, for they constitute the greatest enemy democracy has in North America."